

**MEMO OF RECORD**  
**Developmental Education Task Force**  
**Council on Postsecondary Education**  
**August 8, 2006**

The Developmental Education Task Force of the Council on Postsecondary Education met August 8, 2006, at 10 a.m. at the Council office, Meeting Room A, in Frankfort, Kentucky. Mark Wattier presided over the meeting, substituting for Chair John Turner who was unable to attend the meeting.

**Roll Call**

Members present: Senator Jack Westwood, Representative Harry Moberly, Jr., Tim Miller for Kern Alexander, Dan Collier for Wayne Andrews, Karen Sue Cain, Gary Cox, Virginia Fox, Sarah Hawker, Cheryl Karp, Tom Layzell, Keith Bird for Michael McCall, Laura Owens, Dave Howarth for James Ramsey, Sherry Reid, Connie Ray for Lee Todd, Jr., Pat Moynahan for James Votruba and Lucian Yates, III.

**Task Force Charge**

Mark Wattier and Council staff discussed the progress in developmental education. Kentucky, like the nation, has a challenge to (a) reduce the number of traditional and non-traditional students coming to postsecondary education underprepared and (b) improve the success rates of underprepared students admitted to Kentucky postsecondary institutions. Council staff discussed a report prepared by CPE in November 2005, *Underprepared Students in Kentucky: A First Look at the 2001 Mandatory Placement Policy* (each task force member received a copy of the report). More than half of the first-time freshmen entering Kentucky institutions are underprepared in at least one subject. Furthermore, the first-year drop-out rate of underprepared students is twice the rate of academically-prepared freshmen.

In May 2006, CPE's Quality and Accountability Policy Group requested that a task force be appointed to review issues related to developmental education and to improve developmental student success in college. Recognizing that Kentucky's high school and adult education curriculum reforms and college readiness assessments are effectively being addressed, this task force will be directed to focus on the postsecondary student experience. The following charge was approved by CPE to guide the work of the task force.

*The Postsecondary Developmental Student success Task Force is charged with constructing a comprehensive plan for improving the outcomes of developmental education with accountability measures, goals, and timelines for improvement to be reviewed by the Council for implementation in 2007. To the extent possible, standards for institutional and state level services and outcomes for underprepared students should be identified based on national developmental education research.*

The task force will be asked to deliver its findings at the end of 2006. It was noted that the group's charge focuses on the postsecondary sector responsibility for success of underprepared students, rather than college

readiness of K-12 and non-traditional students.

Several members felt that the charge of the task force was important but requested that the final report, to provide the most comprehensive plan, also address accountability and improvement in partnerships between postsecondary and K-12 institutions to improve the preparation of students.

Jim Applegate, CPE's vice president for academic affairs, presented an overview of Kentucky's policies and information on student preparation and performance in postsecondary education.

## Status of Underprepared Students

Dr. Applegate reviewed the Mandatory Placement Policy, 3 KAR 2:020. Guidelines for admission to state-supported postsecondary education institutions in Kentucky and the Mandatory Placement Policy. He then presented the summary findings from the November 2005 report. The study of underprepared students examined nearly 27,000 freshmen entering Kentucky public two- and four-year institutions in fall 2002. Progress was tracked through the second year of college. It should be noted that 63 percent of these first-year students were Kentucky high school graduates. The remaining thirty-seven percent were adult learners or non-resident students. As the group thinks about strategies to improve success of underprepared students, it must be prepared to consider adult learners, as well as high school graduates.

The group discussed Representative Moberly's question about the ACT. Dr. Applegate noted that ACT is a very good predictor for college level success because the skill and knowledge levels associated with ACT scores have been studied by Kentucky's math and English faculty. Some students with high GPAs from high school can have low ACT scores. Therefore, it was important that the policy reflect a statewide standard so that students and counselors aren't confused about the requirements for college success. All campuses include other criteria for selecting students. Also, the Mandatory Placement Policy allows the ACT score to be supplemented with an institutional placement test for the most accurate assessment.

Dr. Wattier introduced Karen Sue Cain, president of Kentucky Association for Developmental Education (KADE) and director of Eastern Kentucky University's Transition and University Services, and Marcella Davis, coordinator for Madisonville Community and Technical College's Learning Center.

## Kentucky's Student Development Resources

Cain and Davis shared their perspectives on developmental education in Kentucky. Ms. Cain explained that when you remediate, you fix something that is considered broken. Kentucky's students are not broken; they simply need to build some skills and attitudes to be successful in college. Developmental educators are committed to building the skills and also the attitudes. Comprehensive programs are needed and there isn't a quick fix to students in this state.

KADE supports the developmental faculty and provides support and

professional development services. KADE has about 400 members (with over 200 of those coming from KCTCS). Over the last four years, KADE members have worked to better support the diverse student populations through developmental education courses. KADE's leadership team is strong and committed to ensuring that developmental education faculty are well supported so that they can help students. ECU has developed their own faculty training guide, and many other institutions around the state are starting that process.

Ms. Davis noted that among MCTC's freshmen, 75-80 percent of students need developmental math. About 50 percent need developmental English, and about 39 percent need developmental reading. She said MCTC staff is researching developmental education at their institution but for now estimates that about 50 percent of the students recognize their weakness in math and recognize it more readily than their weaknesses in English and reading. Many students avoid taking the subjects in which they have a weakness. In the area of reading, in particular, about 21 percent are being served.

Ms. Davis suggested that there is a placement issue within developmental education that must be addressed. She said that collaboration with KY Adult Education programs is beneficial. Her office refers students not scoring at the threshold to gain admission to the university to the adult education programs.

Ms. Cain shared information about the First Step to College Success Program, which has been at ECU for about 10 years. Seventy-one students participated in the program summer 2006. The students came into the five-week summer program with 255 developmental education needs and ended with summer program with 70. The very first part of the program builds the relationship between ECU and the high schools. The program consists not only of developmental education course work but a transition to college level work, which is a general orientation to the university. The program has been very successful in retaining students, especially African American students.

Ms. Cain reported that developmental reading is making a difference. At ECU, fewer students have developmental reading needs, and the ACT scores improving. She concluded that developmental education does make a difference and reaching the high school students and those in the workforce means that students are coming to college more prepared and developmental education levels are decreasing.

Dr. Wattier asked if a more permanent developmental education work group, such as one of the CPE policy groups, should be formed. After discussion, Dr. Applegate suggested that the group follow the planned schedule of meeting in September, October, November, and December and make recommendations to the Quality and Accountability Policy Group early in 2007.

The next meeting is September 13, 10 a.m. – Noon ET, CPE, Meeting Room A. Dr. Hunter Boylan, will present at the September meeting. Dr.

## Plan of Work and Future Meeting Dates

Boylan is the director of the National Center for Developmental Education. He will discuss state level policy to support best practices in developmental education that have worked well in other states. Afterwards, Sarah Hindman Hawker, CPE's vice president for adult education, will discuss Kentucky adult education resources.

Dr. Wattier noted that the meeting agenda and materials will be posted on the Council's Website: <http://cpe.ky.gov/committees/developmental/>  
(Look for the Developmental Education Task Force under the Committees tab)

The meeting adjourned at 12 Noon EDT.

## Adjournment

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James L. Applegate  
Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Jerry Ann Warmouth  
Executive Secretary for Academic Affairs